

# URGENT ACTION

## EXECUTION DECISION POSTPONED UNTIL 9 JANUARY

**Two men's death sentences imposed by a military court in Bahrain will now be ruled on in January. Amnesty International is calling for their execution not to be carried out and for a re-trial in a civilian court.**

'Ali 'Abdullah Hassan al-Sankis and 'Abdulaziz 'Abdulridha Ibrahim Hussain were sentenced to death on 28 April 2011 by a military court, the National Safety Court of First Instance, though they are civilians, after having been found guilty of killing two policemen during the March 2011 anti-government protests. They appealed, and the military National Safety Court of Appeal upheld their sentences on 22 May, while commuting those of two other men convicted with them.

The death sentences were submitted to the Court of Cassation for a review. On 28 November their lawyer submitted a request to the court to order a re-trial on the basis of allegations of widespread torture and other ill-treatment used against all those detained in connection with the February and March protests, described in a report by the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) issued on 23 November, and also because they had been sentenced by a military court. The two defendants alleged they were tortured in detention. Their "confessions" were used against them in court. The Court of Cassation's verdict has now been postponed until 9 January. If the sentences are upheld and then ratified by the King, the two men will be executed.

The National Safety Court of First Instance, which originally convicted the two men, was made up of three judges, two of them military and one civilian. Courts like this and the National Safety Court of Appeal ceased to exist after the first week of October 2011 following a decree issued by the King at the end of August 2011 to transfer all pending cases from military to civilian courts. Amnesty International considers that military courts should not be used to try civilians and that any death sentence of a civilian imposed by a military court would fall short of full respect for international standards of fair trial including their right to be tried by an independent and impartial tribunal. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases.

### **Please write immediately in English, Arabic or your own language:**

- Acknowledge that the government of Bahrain has a responsibility to maintain public order and bring to justice those who commit crimes, but point out this should always be done in accordance with international law and fair trial standards, and Bahrain's international human rights obligations;
- Urge the authorities not to carry out the execution of 'Ali 'Abdullah Hassan al-Sankis and 'Abdulaziz 'Abdulridha Ibrahim Hussain, if the sentences are upheld by the Court of Cassation;
- Express concern that the two defendants did not receive a fair trial and urge the authorities to immediately order a re-trial before a civilian court in proceedings that meet international standards for fair trial and without recourse to the death penalty
- Urge the Bahraini authorities the allegation of torture by the defendants be independently investigated.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JANUARY 2012 TO:**

King  
Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa  
Office of His Majesty the King  
P.O. Box 555  
Rifa'a Palace, Manama, Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1766 4587

Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs  
Shaikh Khaled bin Ali Al Khalifa  
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs  
P. O. Box 450, Manama , Bahrain  
Fax: +973 1753 1284  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**Salutation: Your Majesty**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fourth update of UA 122/11. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/055/2011/en>

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Name: 'Ali 'Abdullah Hassan al-Sankis and 'Abdulaziz 'Abdulridha Ibrahim Hussain

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 122/11 Index: MDE 11/064/2011 Issue Date: 8 December 2011